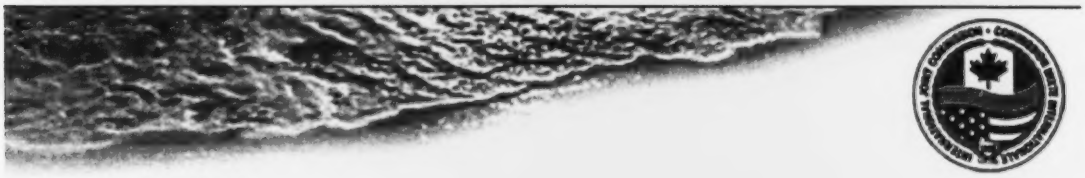

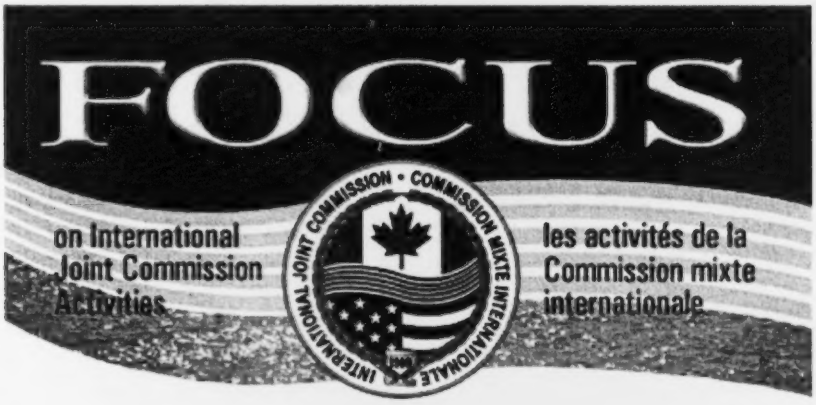
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International Joint Commission
Summer 2008
Volume 33, Issue 1

IJC to celebrate centennial in Niagara Falls in June 2009

Niagara Falls will be the stunning backdrop for an historic event the weekend of Saturday, June 13, 2009, when Commissioners meet with the Niagara 10 Leaders to celebrate the centennial of the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty that created the IJC. Niagara Falls is significant because it is one of only two geographic regions referred to by name in the Treaty.

An organizing committee known as BWT100 will plan public events to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of the IJC. Initial members of BWT100 are the Niagara 10 Leaders from the ten local jurisdictions bordering the international Niagara River — the cities of Buffalo, Niagara Falls New York and Niagara Falls Ontario, the towns of Fort Erie and Niagara on the Lake, the villages of Lewiston and Youngstown, Erie and Niagara counties, and the Regional Municipality of Niagara — the U.S. Consulate General in Toronto, the Canadian Consulate General in Buffalo, the Niagara Parks Commission, New York State Parks and the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission, and the IJC.

The Niagara event will be the highlight of a year-long, coast-to-coast commemoration of the centennial along the border in all basins where the IJC has active transboundary water responsibilities. The IJC expects to invite current and former Presidents, Prime Ministers, Secretaries of State and Foreign Ministers, as well as all former IJC Commissioners to the ceremony. Plans are also being developed for binational music and cultural programs, environmental and historic displays, and hands on activities for children in conjunction with the formal ceremony.

Background scientific reports leading to the 15th Biennial Report to be discussed at next Biennial Meeting October 6-7, 2009 in Windsor, Ontario

Article VII of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement stipulates that:

> "The Commission shall make a full report to the Parties and to the State and Provincial Governments no less frequently than biennially concerning progress toward the achievement of the General and Specific Objectives... This report shall include an assessment of the effectiveness of the programs and other measures undertaken pursuant to this Agreement, and advice and recommendations."

To help assess progress toward achieving the goal of restoring the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes basin ecosystem, the Commission will ask experts, stakeholders and members of the public to take part in workshops at its next Biennial Meeting October 6-7, 2009, in Windsor, Ontario and review several cutting-edge scientific reports from its advisory bodies regarding the nearshore waters of the Great Lakes. These reports and the workshop discussions about them will be important building blocks in the development of the Commission's 15th Biennial Report on Great Lakes Water Quality, which is scheduled to be issued in early 2010. The Commission plans to release the reports in draft form prior to the meeting.

Following a recommendation in its 2006 report, *Advice to Governments on Their Review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement*, the 2009 meeting also will include the Commission's first-ever **Great Lakes Stakeholders Forum**. This event will give interested organizations a more direct way to develop resolutions on the state of the Great Lakes that the Commission can facilitate and transmit to the governments of Canada and the United States. Bringing together a wide range of interests, ranging from industry and environmental groups to government organizations, could allow for the identification of synergies as well as for the development of collaborative action plans where prudent.

IJC Advisory Boards Focusing on Great Lakes Nearshore Waters

Despite the vital importance of the nearshore as the portion of the lakes where most people live, work and play, the current Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement contains few specifics regarding nearshore waters. The nearshore is also a critical link between the watershed with its many tributaries and wetlands and the offshore waters of the Great Lakes. Ecological and economic impacts most often appear in nearshore

waters including stinking mats of algae washed up on shorelines, industrial and municipal water intakes clogged by algae and zebra mussels and swimming beaches closed by bacterial contamination.

Reflecting an increasing concern for declines in nearshore water quality, the Commission wrote to the two federal governments in July 2007 and December 2007, stating that problems in the Great Lakes nearshore waters are significant enough to warrant opening the Agreement for updating and revision on basis of nearshore issues alone. IJC advisory boards held workshops in November 2007 and March 2008 that brought together academic, government and industry experts to develop an adaptive management framework for the nearshore waters of the Great Lakes. Results of these workshops are currently being analyzed by the advisory boards to provide more substantive advice to the Commission and governments on the critical science, resource management, governance and policy needs related to Great Lakes nearshore waters. A complimentary compact disk of the workshop papers and presentations is available by contacting commission@windsor.ijc.org.

IJC releases two reports on Canada-United States transboundary air quality

In May of 2008, the International Joint Commission released two reports dealing with transboundary air quality: *Synthesis of Public Comment on the 2006 Progress Report under the Canada-United States Air Quality Agreement* and *Second Summary of Critical Air Quality Issues in the Transboundary Region*.

The *Second Summary of Critical Air Quality Issues* recognizes the progress made by the two countries on issues identified in the first report. The new analysis offers recommendations on six key areas of transboundary air quality. The Commission endorses the recommendations of its advisory board that the Canadian and U.S. governments should:

1. encourage private sector air quality research and development using practical measures such as tax incentives tied to emission reductions;
2. use the U.S.-Canada Air Quality Agreement to address emerging transboundary air quality issues in the west;
3. provide international leadership to reduce aviation and marine emissions by example, including ratification of Annex VI of the International Maritime Organization's MARPOL Convention;
4. support the collection of consistent and useful air quality data by maintaining stable funding and additional coordination of transboundary monitoring systems;
5. work with provinces, states, cities and regional governments to "green" their own operations and to support programs financially that reduce and control pollution from open burning, wood stoves, and consumer products such as lawn and garden equipment; and
6. examine their current regulatory regimes for existing substances to assess their applicability and effectiveness in regulating newly developed and recognized substances such as nanomaterials.

In providing comments on the *2006 Progress Report*, nearly all respondents expressed strong support for the Air Quality Agreement and its success in fostering binational cooperation on pollution control,

monitoring, research and information exchange. Respondents were satisfied that substantial progress has been made by both countries to reduce emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds. Nevertheless, most agreed that more needs to be done to mitigate transboundary air pollution, and several advocated that more attention be paid to developments in western parts of the continent.

Both reports are available at http://www.ijc.org.

Draft new Order and plan for regulation of water levels and flows for Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River proposed by IJC for public comment

Commission holds 20 information sessions and hearings to inform the public and receive comments

For nearly 50 years, the Commission has regulated levels and flows of Lake Ontario and the international section of the St. Lawrence River.

Following five years of study and extensive public input, earlier this year, the Commission released a new regulation plan called Plan 2007 and a proposed new Order for public comment.

Following the announcement, Commission staff and experts held information sessions in late April and early May in 10 communities around both Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River on both sides of the dam and in both countries. In June, Commissioners convened formal public hearings in the same locations to receive comments. In Canada, the sessions were in Belleville, Kingston and Port Jordan, Ontario and also in Montreal and Sorel-Tracy, Quebec. In the United States, the meetings were in Alexandria Bay, Oswego, Olcott, Greece and Massena, New York.

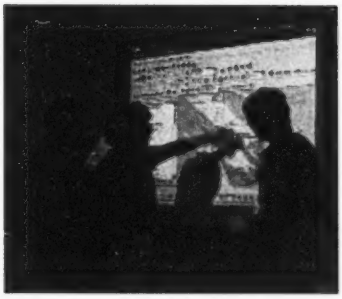
Following the comment period, which ended on July 11, 2008, the Commissioners thanked the public, elected officials and state and provincial governments for their participation. Commissioners also said that they believed that the comment period was productive in clarifying the views of the different stakeholders in the basin.

The IJC met in mid August to consider these comments and deliberate on the future regulation of Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River water levels and flows. The August meeting also included a session with representatives of the federal governments of Canada and the United States to discuss the process for consulting with them, and through them, with the provinces of Ontario and Quebec and the state of New York. The IJC will seek the concurrence of the two federal governments before making a final decision.

For additional information, go to www.ijc.org/LOSLdocuments. *All public comments will also be posted on the Web.*

IJC INITIATIVE SEEKS HARMONIZED MAPS: Creating higher-resolution maps and geographic data for border watersheds

Under the International Watersheds Initiative *(see companion article)*, the IJC has since 2005 supported work to produce consistent and comparable geographic data sets for river basins that straddle the Canada-U.S. boundary. Over the years, each country has developed its own geographic information system (GIS) datasets, but until recently such datasets at a scale usable for planners and managers at the basin level have stopped at the border. Initial attempts to splice the data from the two countries at the frontier have revealed many inconsistencies:



- rivers and other features do not quite line up;
- elevation contours do not connect or are not expressed in the same units;
- geographic features are shown at different levels of detail and resolution;
- lines defining catchment areas (indicating areas where surface waters converge) do not match;
- terminology for geographic features, ground cover or land use is inconsistent.

2007 Data Harmonization Workshop in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Nelda Craig, New Brunswick Department of Environment, Faye Cowie, Watershed Technologies, NB, and Lee Sochasky, St. Croix International Waterway Commission, discuss confluence.

Such disconnects have hampered efforts to develop an integrated, holistic understanding of transboundary basins. Recognizing this problem, the IJC launched a pilot effort in the St. Croix basin (Maine-New Brunswick) to develop a "harmonized" GIS dataset, in which available data from both sides of the border are melded into a single, seamless product that provides a unified picture of the watershed. Such GIS information typically begins with basic geographic features such as rivers, lakes, wetlands, but additional "data layers" can be added as information becomes available for political features, soil types, land use, etc.

A complicating factor is that the needed data for any basin or region have been collected and stored by a variety of different federal and state/provincial agencies in each country. As a result, a critical first step is bringing together representatives of these agencies to create a complete data inventory, spelling out the information available, who has it, how it is stored, what formats, standards and definitions are used, among other details. After that, the careful work of reconciling the data and structuring it into an agreed format that best serves the needs of all interests can begin.

For the St. Croix pilot exercise, the IJC provided US$50,000 in seed money to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in 2005-06 to produce a suite of seamless, harmonized hydrographic GIS data for the St. Croix River Basin. Responding to provincial and state requirements, the USGS, working with the active cooperation and financial and in-kind

contributions of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the New Brunswick Department of Environment, recommended a focus on the synchronization of drainage area accounting units (topographically delineated watersheds with unique addressees) and the harmonization of all the hydrographic features such as water bodies, lakes, reservoirs, streams and rivers. Once the appropriate technical people were identified, New Brunswick hosted three harmonization workshops, involving local experts from both sides of the border.

The harmonization workshops encouraged a hands-on approach *(see photo)*, where all participants contributed their expertise. Building on published hydrographic data from New Brunswick and Maine, workshop participants were able to agree on common watershed interpretations, address assignments and naming protocols. The resulting harmonized hydrographic data layers *(see map and accompanying table)* include a seamless layer of topographically based drainage areas — the International Watershed Boundary Dataset (IWBD) — and a synchronized hydrographic dataset that includes all the water bodies, lakes, reservoirs, streams and rivers — the International Hydrographic Dataset (IHD). These datasets provide a basic framework, to which maps and data products can be added in response to local needs.

Now, for the first time, managers and planners on both sides of the border are able to speak the same language and share the same data and analytical tools with regard to the geological and hydrological features of the St. Croix watershed. This is valuable for long-term planning, and can also facilitate a coordinated response to possible incidents such as a chemical spill or flooding event. Local participation in the creation of the datasets and local stewardship and maintenance of the data are essential to the success of this approach. The International Joint Commission is not in the business of creating or warehousing GIS data, but can help the relevant state, provincial and federal partners come together to develop datasets that meet their needs.

Using the St. Croix experience as a model, the IJC plans to extend this approach to GIS data harmonization method to other IJC mandate areas. The eventual aim is to stimulate the harmonization of GIS layers across the entire Canadian-U.S. frontier. Addressing these disconnects in binational data is a formidable and labor-intensive task, but the St. Croix experience has shown how it can be done.

Example of the harmonized drainage areas and hydrography for the St. Croix River Basin

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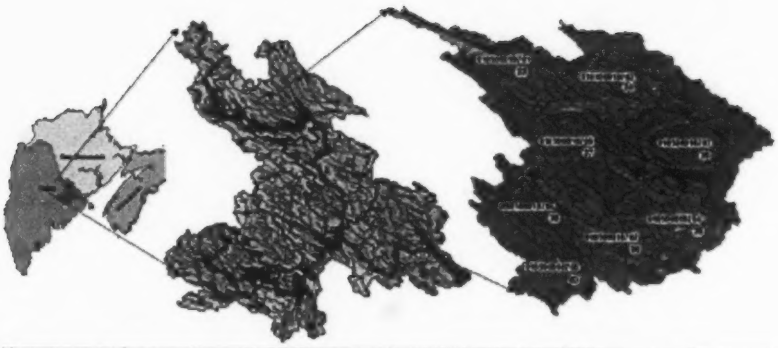

Hydrolic Unit Level Niveau de l'unité hydrologique	Hydrolic Unit Designation Désignation de l'unité hydrologique	WSD Code Code WSD	New Brunswick SNB Name Nouveau-Brunswick Nom du SNB	Hydrolic Unit Name Nom de l'unité hydrologique	IWSD Code "Code IWSD"
4th Level 4e niveau	Subbasin Sous-bassin	01050001	St. Croix Level 1 Ste Croix Niveau 1	St. Croix Ste Croix	
5th Level 5e niveau	Watershed Bassin hydrographique	0105000107	Canoose Composite Level 2 Composite Canoose Niveau 2	Upper St. Croix Cours supérieur de la rivière Ste Croix	
6th Level 6e niveau	Subwatershed Sous-bassin hydrographique	010500010703	Canoose Stream Level 3 Ruisseau Canoose Niveau 3	Canoose Flowage Réservoir Canoose	35

Commission, boards and stakeholders strategize to strengthen the International Watershed Initiative (IWI)

Canadian and U.S. representatives of ten IJC Boards, together with Commissioners, staff, and other interested stakeholders and officials, met in Vancouver, B.C. this spring to review progress, exchange ideas, share information and discuss the future direction of the International Watersheds Initiative (IWI). Participants at the workshop took note of various achievements under the IWI, highlighting IJC's support for efforts to compile consistent comparable and seamless geographic information for basins that straddle the border (see companion article). They also identified ways in which the IWI could be enhanced and strengthened, including through the clearer definition of operating principles and a more explicit strategic framework.

The IWI promotes an integrated, ecosystem approach to issues arising in transboundary waters through enhanced local participation and strengthened local capacity. It was conceived to facilitate the development of watershed-specific responses to emerging challenges such as intensified population growth and urbanization, global climate change, changing quantity and uses of water, pollution from air and land, and introductions of exotic species. The underlying premise is that local people, given appropriate assistance, are those best positioned to resolve many local transboundary problems.

During preparations for the IWI Workshop, Commissioner Irene Brooks commented, "a key feature of the International Watersheds Initiative is its emphasis on an ecosystem approach, by which we mean an integrated approach that sees the bigger picture, takes the long view, and is not confined by traditional jurisdictional boundaries."

Commissioner Jack Blaney added: "In order to successfully tackle transboundary issues, we need a participatory approach that promotes partnerships, strengthens collaboration, enhances information sharing and improves coordination among all interests in the basin."

The IJC first proposed the IWI concept to strengthen its Boards in 1997, and further elaborated on it following a broad, consultative process under a specific Reference from the governments of Canada and the United States in November 1998. Four pilot International Watershed Boards were designated, covering the St. Croix, Red, Rainy and Souris river basins. The International St. Croix River Watershed Board became the first full-fledged IWI Board in April 2007. Presentations from all four Boards on their accomplishments and the challenges they faced helped kick off the discussion at the Vancouver workshop.

All four presentations indicated that their IWI is operating on the principle of engagement with and among local governments and stakeholders. Examples included:

- All IWI boards have incorporated specific projects in their work plans that provide watershed-based tools to stakeholders.
- St. Croix plans to distribute widely a 'State of the Watershed" report.
- Rainy River still has separate boards for water quality and quantity, but these operate in close coordination, have conducted public meetings with resource agencies and dam operators, held outreach meetings with First Nations, and participated in local and regional conferences organized by other stakeholders.

In the discussion that followed the Board presentations, their members indicated that providing tangible benefits to others, such as maps, scientific data, models, and environmental monitoring data generated through a consensual, binational approach had been very important in obtaining support for the local IWI.

While the Initiative has contributed to the enhanced effectiveness of the IJC Boards that have embraced the watershed approach, the Commission has taken a fresh look at the IWI so that more can be done to promote this work and stimulate progress. This workshop reflects that commitment to the success of IWI as does action by Commission to designate two staff members — Willem Brakel (brakelw@washington.ijc.org) and Ted Yuzyk (yuzykt@ottawa.ijc.org) — to serve as IWI Coordinators. The Coordinators are taking the shared experiences and recommendations of the workshop and working with IJC Boards, Commissioners and staff to identify opportunities to strengthen the watershed approach in each basin.

Further information about the IWI is available at http://www.ijc.org/conseil_board/watershed/en/watershed_home_accueil.htm.

Participants at the conclusion of the International Watersheds Initiative Workshop held at the Morris K. Wosk Centre for Dialogue of Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, B.C.. Credit: Glen Milne.

People

Sam Speck, Commissioner, United States Section

Sam Speck joined the IJC in May. He had served for eight years as Ohio's Director of Natural Resources. Prior to that he had been president of Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio for over a decade. He also served as an associate director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and as a member of the Ohio House and Senate for 13 years while on the Muskingum College faculty.

While in office as Ohio's Director of Natural Resources, Mr. Speck served as a member and chair of the Ohio Lake Erie Commission and Great Lakes Commission. He also served as chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors and Premiers' Water Management Working Group, which developed the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact and Agreement.

Pierre Trépanier, Commissioner, Canadian Section

Pierre Trépanier joined the IJC in April. He has been a member of the Labour and Employment Group of the law firm of Heenan Blaikie where he was a partner since 1975.

He has extensive experience in labour relations as a legal advisor to national and international corporations, particularly in the negotiation of collective agreements. He represents clients before all courts as well as administrative and quasi-judicial tribunals, at both the provincial and federal levels.

From 1993 to 1995, Mr. Trépanier was chairman of the Board of Magnétotheque, an audio book production centre for the visually challenged; he was a member of the board of Berlitz Canada from 1991 to 2001, and of Berlitz GlobalNet Canada until 2001. He has served on the advisory board of Care Canada for several years.

Dr. Charles A. Lawson, U.S. Section Secretary

Dr. Charles Lawson joined the staff of the IJC in July. He had served at the U.S. Department of State, most recently at the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, where he was responsible for water and environmental issues in the Middle East peace negotiations. He also coordinated U.S. Government strategies for science and technology assistance to the countries of the former Soviet Union and developed cooperative science and technology activities for the Africa and Near East and South Asia regions.

Windsor Great Lakes Regional Office

John McDonald has retired after 22 years of service at GLRO where he served the Commission as secretary to the International Air Quality Advisory Board.

The IJC welcomes new appointments to its boards and expresses its gratitude to those who contributed their time and talent to assist Canada and the U.S. with managing transboundary environmental issues.

International Upper Great Lakes Study Board Welcomes:

Dr. John J. Boland, Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering, The Johns Hopkins University

Council of Great Lakes Research Managers Welcomes:

Dr. Brian A. Grantham, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Dr. John Dettmers, Great Lakes Fishery Commission

Completing Service:

Cheryl Lewis, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Dr. Charles C. Krueger, Great Lakes Fishery Commission

Great Lakes Science Advisory Board Welcomes:

Dr. Jeff Ridal, St. Lawrence River Institute of Environmental Sciences

Dr. Susan Schantz, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

Dr. Richard Whitman, U.S. Geological Survey Great Lakes Science Center

Completing Service:

Dr. David Lean, University of Ottawa

Dr. Joan Rose, Michigan State University

Jay Unwin, National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, Inc.

Great Lakes Water Quality Board Welcomes:

Dr. David E. Boerner, Geological Survey of Canada

Eric Boysen, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Terry J. Cosby, U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

Maxine Kingston, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Completing Service:

Alec Denys, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Adel Shalaby, Health Canada

International Air Quality Advisory Board Welcomes:

Barry J. Jessiman, Health Canada

Completing Service:

Peggy Farnsworth, Public Works and Government Services Canada

International Lake Superior Board of Control and International Niagara Board of Control Welcomes:

Colonel Jeffrey C. Smith, U.S. Co-Chair (Interim), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Completing Service:

General Bruce A. Berwick, U.S. Co-Chair, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

International Rainy Lake Board of Control Welcomes:

Glenn Witherspoon, Fort Frances, Ontario

Completing Service:

Peter Williams, Thunder Bay, Ontario

International Rainy River Water Pollution Board Welcomes:

Melanie Neilson, Environment Canada

Completing Service:

John Merriman, Environment Canada

International Red River Board Welcomes:

Mike Renouf, Environment Canada

Girma Sahlu, Canadian Co-Secretary Environment Canada

Stefanie Jordan, U.S. Co-Secretary Bureau of Reclamation

Completing Service:

Wayne Dyvbig, Canadian Co-Chair, Saskatchewan Watershed Authority

International St. Croix River Watershed Board Welcomes:

Colonel Philip T. Feir, U.S. Co-Chair, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Charles LeBlanc, Environment Canada

Dr. Robert Stephenson, St. Andrews Biological Station

Completing Service:

Colonel Curtis Thalken, U.S. Co-Chair, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

International Upper Great Lakes Study Board Public Interest Advisory Group Welcomes:

David Irish, Marina Operator, Harbor Springs, Michigan

Dan Thomas, Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council

James H.I. Weakley, Lake Carriers Association

Jeff Vito, City of Superior, Wisconsin

International Souris River Board Welcomes:

Bob White, North Dakota State Water Commission

Contact Us

The IJC is interested in your views on our activities. You may contact us the following ways:

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Allen I. Olson Commissioner, United States Section	Jack Blaney Commissioner, Canadian Section
Sam Speck Commissioner, United States Section	Pierre Trépanier Commissioner, Canadian Section

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